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THE
Impertinence *and* Imposture
OF
Modern *ANTIQUARIES*
DISPLAY'D.

OR, A
REFUTATION of the Rev. Mr. WISE'S LETTER
to Dr. MEAD, concerning the WHITE HORSE, and
other *Antiquities* in *Berkshire*.

IN
A FAMILIAR LETTER to a FRIEND.

By *PHILALETHES RUSTICUS*.

— — — — — WITH *Bumped Esq;*

A PREFACE by the GENTLEMAN to whom this
LETTER was addressed.

*Ære Immortali donavit Honoratiss. DNS BARODE * * * F. W.*
Thus endless LIES on Ages are entail'd. J. D.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. OSBORN, at the *Golden Ball*, in *Pater-Noster-Row*.

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1740.

THE
IMPORTANCE OF
MODERN
DIPLOMACY

THE IMPORTANCE OF
MODERN DIPLOMACY
TO THE
WORLD

A
PRACTICAL
GUIDE
TO
DIPLOMACY

A
PRACTICAL
GUIDE
TO
DIPLOMACY
BY
THE
AUTHOR
OF
THE
IMPORTANCE OF
MODERN DIPLOMACY

THE
IMPORTANCE OF
MODERN DIPLOMACY
TO THE
WORLD
(THE
OLD
WORLD)



P R E F A C E

T O T H E

R E A D E R,

F R O M A

G E N T L E M A N to whom this L E T T E R
was Address'd.

TH O' nothing was originally less intended, than
the Publication of the following L E T T E R;
yet the Manuscript having been unadvisedly
communicated to some who made no Secret of
the Contents, and very probably have suffer'd Copies or
Abstracts to be taken, I thought I could not do better,
in Order to prevent a surreptitious and imperfect Edi-
tion, than to permit it to go to the Press in the State I
receiv'd it from the Author.

A 2

This

This, I hope, will be some Apology with the learned Gentleman on the other Side the Question for the Liberties of the Style. The Publick also perhaps may be better pleased with what passes on these Occasions betwixt Friends, in an easy, free, and undisguised Manner, and comes accidentally to their Knowledge, than with what is designedly compos'd for them, not without great Caution and Reserve: in the one Case they see only what Men write, in the other what they talk and what they think.

But had nothing of this offer'd for the Publishing of what ensues, we should not have wanted a still better Reason, indeed the justest and best of all others, which is the Benefit the Publick may receive from it: as it will put well-meaning People upon their guard against being thus impos'd upon hereafter, and make some others more cautious how they Attempt to impose upon them.

We have here a Detection, clear as the Sun, of an Imposture, I had almost said, the most Notorious and Flagrant the present Age has yet seen to come from the Press: The Dramatis Personæ, or principal Actors in this Farce, not to say any thing of a late noble Peer, whose unguarded Goodness seems to have been much abused, are no less than a Reverend DIVINE who holds a very considerable Rank in our chief Seat of Literature, and a PHYSICIAN who has been long regarded as at the Top of his own Profession, and is now perch'd, it seems, on the very Pinacle of all antient Learning.

The

PREFACE.

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The latter perhaps may be considered rather as an Accessory, than Principal in the Plot; but can by no Means be excused from an equal share of Blame, as he has contributed both his PURSE and NAME to promote it. Nay rather will he have more to answer for, as 'tis the great Reputation he has attain'd to, that has given Vogue and Credit to the Imposition. The fantastick Visions of a Monkish Academick might have met with little Attention out of his own Cell; but so great a NAME as that of MEAD excites the Curiosity of the Publick, and attracts the Regard and Respect of the learned World around us. 'Tis a NAME, whose Influence is not confin'd within the narrow Bounds of our own Seas, but shines with distinguish'd Lustre abroad as well as at home: 'Tis therefore with much Concern I reflect how very bad Use has been made of it in the present Case: And what more especially affects me, is the Consideration of the Prejudice it must do us in the Judgment of all inquisitive and ingenious Foreigners: What an Opinion must they have of the present State of Knowledge amongst us, when one, who is confessedly at the Head of it, has given Countenance and Patronage to such a weak, not to say wicked, Performance!

When they behold the learned Doctor himself a Dupe to such an assuming Empirick, such an arrant Quack in Antiquities, will they not naturally infer--- "If such an one can hit his blind Side, tis not the first Time he has been imposed upon;" or that at least (which is no uncommon

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mon Case in Age)--- " he is now grown over-credulous, " and gives an implicit Faith to every sham Pretender to " Discoveries: As nothing, in another Way, is incredible " to those who are once grown fond of Miracles: " --- But I forbear in compassion to so great a Man who has thus, inadvertently perhaps, suffered himself to be eclips'd, by the officious Interposition of an opacous Body, in the Meridian of his Glory: And I cannot but lament in particular that the Credit of his noble Collection of Curiosities, upon which so many Years, so many Cares, so many thousand Pounds have been expended, should thus in an Instant be blown and tarnish'd by this ridiculous Disaster the ADVENTURE OF THE WHITE HORSE.

*The best Excuse I can think the Case will admit is--- that the Doctor never read the Letter address'd to him, at least before it was in Print. But then, alas! the ill-natur'd Age we live in, I fear, would be apt to ask--- " If he never read it, how came it to have the Sanction " of his Patronage?" If he did read it, how could he hear the fulsom Incense of an adulating Priest, telling him, totidem verbis, to his Face. --- " He is one who from " being the greatest Master is become the greatest Patron " of ancient Learning that the present Age can boast of." * Had the Addresser indeed only chang'd the Order of his Compliment, and told the Doctor that he was become the greatest Master of ancient Learning from being the greatest Patron of it, it had been less liable to Exception: Nothing being more common than to find Men learned, and wise,*

Letter, Paragraph I.

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wife, and noble, and virtuous in Proportion to the Encouragement they give to their Dedicators.

But why, will some one say, should I be thus solicitous for Mitigations? The greatest Men have so frequently betray'd an immoderate Passion for Praise and Glory, that it seems to be more incident to such than others, and may possibly be something more Natural to them: Even TULLY, with all his Philosophy about him could not resist the Charms of these bewitching Sirens: (a) And perhaps never did Temptations run higher than in the present Case;--to stand the foremost of his Country in the List of Fame, and be recorded to all Posterity as the modern Coryphæus of antient Learning;--- 'twas a Consummation (to borrow an Expression of my Countryman) devoutly to be wish'd! Let FRANCE no longer boast her MONTFAUCONS, her ROLLINS, &c. &c. &c. when this British SUN of Antiquity appears, O all ye Stars hide your diminish'd Heads!

(a) As a demonstrative Evidence to what a surprising Degree this Prince of Orators, Statesmen and Philosophers was intoxicated by this Species of Vanity, we need only produce these few Passages out of much more to the same Purpose, from a Letter of his to his Friend LUCCEIUS, whom he was courting to write his Life. Viz.
 "Ardeo cupiditate incredibili nomen ut nostrum scriptis illustretur & celebretur tuis." ---- Non enim me solum commemoratio posteritatis ad spem quandam immortalitatis rapit, sed etiam illa cupiditas, ut vel autoritate testimonii tui, vel indicio benevolentiae, vel SUAVITATE INGENII VIVI PERFRUAMUR." ---- "Deinde etiam ut ornes me postulem." ---- "Itaque te plane etiam atque etiam rogo, ut & ornes ea vehementius etiam quam fortasse sentis, et meo leges Historiae negligas, ---- amorique nostro plusculum etiam quam concedit Veritas, largiare."
 ---- "Illa nos cupiditas incendit festinationis quod alacres animo sumus, ut & ceteri, viventibus nobis, ex libris tuis nos cognoscant, & nosmet-ipsi viri gloriosam nostram perfruamur."

Ep. Tam. Lib. v. Ep. 12.

But

But this is not the only Tryal of the Doctor's Modesty: in the very next Paragraph (and I am a little surpris'd my Correspondent takes no Notice of it) must be farther hear that "he has been long since thoroughly vers'd in "all the Learning of other Nations." Here again a fatal Dilemma occurs: Either the Doctor believ'd this, or he did not: If he did not; why did he let it pass? If he did; certainly never was that of the Satyrist better verified.

-----" Nihil est quod credere de se
,, Non possit, cum laudatur."-----

*Holy Writ tells us of MOSES, that "he was learned
§ Acts vii. 22. "in all the Wisdom of the Egyptians." § This is a very
high Encomium; and, no doubt was design'd as such:
but, lo, a greater than MOSES is here! A Man not
barely learned, but thoroughly vers'd; not in the Wisdom
of EGYPT only--- but in all the Learning of that and all
other Nations! These are Words soon said: Yet, though
contained in a little Compass, I do not see what more can
be added to them. I shall only observe on the Occasion,
that gross Flattery certainly becomes no Man; but in a
Divine is abominable, insufferable and worse: And as to
the Person who is the Object of it, the only Privilege he
enjoys is (in the Language of our Proverb) to have his
Throat cut with a Feather: He is at the same Time tick-
led and expos'd: This really is matter of Condolence, and
wherein all his true Friends must sympathise with him:
However*

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However 'tis some Consolation to think, that so great a Master of ancient Learning cannot fail at his leisure to recollect that wise Saying of the Antients, that " of all " tame Beasts the most dangerous is a PARASITE."

These obvious Considerations have already detain'd me much longer than I at first design'd in this my Advertisement au Lecteur. But I must not omit the Opportunity seriously to admonish the Reverend Gentleman now in Hand, how much it concerns him either fairly to vindicate his Performance from my Friend's Objections, or ingenuously to acknowledge the many miserable Mistakes he has fallen into: And also to make, as we say, a little more Conscience for the Future what he offers to the Publick.

In the 55th Page of his Letter he tells us, that what he was then writing, " was only a seasonable Diversion " from the Fatigue of a much larger Work, which " since his first Entrance upon it, had continually " grown upon his Hands, and found him full Employ- " ment for several Years last past; and that he feared " (good Man!) there was enough left for one or two " more to come." This MAJUS OPUS, I understand, is a voluminous Account of Coins and Medals: A very curious Subject truly; but not of the clearest Reputation.

Amongst the Reflexions of a late ingenious Author upon Human Learning we have this remarkable one to our present Purpose, viz. " Whoever, says he, considers " that ANNIUS of VITERBO' (this ANNIUS, by the " way

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“ way, was a Monk turned Antiquary) could forge
 “ large Histories, will not think it strange that we should
 “ have Forgeries in Medals: It is too certain there have
 “ been such; and the Thing is so noted, that some Me-
 “ dals are now as valuable for being exact Counterfeits,
 “ as others are for being truly Originals.” †

† p. 161. Ed.
 6.

I do remember also to have read, I think, in Mr. BAYLE, of a most celebrated Antiquarian in the Low Countries, for his Books and Coins, second to none; who, perceiving the general Dotage of his contemporary Virtuosi in this Particular, resolved to take the Advantage of it; and, to his own no small Emolument, actually turned FALSE-COINER. Which Sort of Business in Italy has now been long so very common, that I should not be at all surprized to hear they take 'Prentices to it; especially should the Demand for ANTIQUES continue to run so high as of late with our MEN of TASTE.

But as 'tis not impossible but the Publick may take the Alarm upon what is now laid before them, it will much, very much, behove our Reverend and Learned Gentleman to clear himself of the Imputation of JOCKY-SHIP with Relation to his HORSE, before he offers to palm his COINS and MEDALS upon us. Till this is done, he must expect common Purchasers will be a little Shy of him; and even his particular Friends and Subscribers perhaps may be apt to reflect upon the Fate of the PR. and the DR. and not immediately forget to what excellent Purposes their Generosity was applied.

Another

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Another Project he has much at Heart is to get himself at the Head of a travelling Committee of his Brother Antiquaries † (to which I freely subscribe) in ^{† Letter p. 6, and 8,} *order to traverse every County of the Kingdom in Search, not of Romish Priests, no, those are no Rarities! but of Roman Towns; which, it seems still lurk up and down unobserved in all our Quarters: And himself, as he tells us, has already discover'd no less than Three in one Corner of Oxfordshire: Tho' CAMDEN, PLOT, KENNET, and STUKELY were such Buzzards they trod over 'em without seeing 'em. And what still makes more for the Honour of our Author is, that one of these said Towns may justly challenge, he tells us, the Name of a City: " And which (says he) I suspect to be the true BRANAVIS " of RAVENNAS." * But others, I find, do more than* ^{* p. 9.} *suspect it to be only the true and genuine Remains of certain superannuated Quarry-Pits, out of which the Parish Church, Great House adjoining, &c. were built.*

These Whims, I must own, have somewhat diverting in them; and put me in mind of Sir JOHN DENHAM'S Account of the present State of FARY-LAND in Windsor Forest, when he was a writing his COOPER'S-HILL, viz.

" This Scene had some bold Greek, or British Bard,
 " Beheld of old, what wonders had we heard;
 " Of Faries, Satyrs, and the Nymphs their Dames,
 " Their Feasts, their Revels, and their am'rous Flames?
 " 'Tis still the same; altho' their very Shape,
 " All but a QUICK POETICK SIGHT ESCAPE!"

'Tis pretty plain our Knight here makes use of his Licentia Poetica : The Benefit whereof our Painters also, as well as Poets claim by Prescription immemorial ; and with these two honourable Companies, might I be worthy to advise, should our modern Antiquaries get themselves incorporated ; and then might they plead CHARTER for the Privilege they now usurp Quidlibet audendi, i. e. of imposing whatever they please upon us.

I am very sensible I may probably incur some Censure for the Hint I have now given : But my Apology in Petto is --- that were our Antiquaries known to act under a common PATENT with the worthy Gentleman aforesaid, their Discoveries would be regarded hereafter in the same Light with the Fancies and Inventions of their good Friends and Allies ; and consequently themselves would have the less to answer for.

But at present the Case is far otherwise ; they set up (as all Bites do) for Men of strict Honour and Veracity ; yea, as most industrious Searchers after Truth ; and those that, above all others, have brought Light out of Darknes ; and as such have they much insinuated themselves into the good Graces of our young Nobility and Gentry in our chief Places of Education. Of this our Author himself shall be my Witness. --- " Young Gentlemen (says he, p. 6.) have been taught to reckon this " Study amongst their chiefest personal Accomplishments." To which we may add what he has advanced in the preceding

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ceding Paragraph, viz. “ So that the present Age,
“ notwithstanding all its boasted Light and Knowledge,
“ should it fall into a Contempt of Antiquity would want
“ one of the most infallible Characteristicks of Learning
“ and true Politeness.”

Had these and the like Periods been found in a Preface to the BRITANNIA of Mr. CAMDEN or Mr. HORSELEY, I should readily grant they would not look so much like Things out of their proper Element: But who that has any Regard for the right Instruction of the rising Generation, can bear to see such empty Puffs employed, with all priestly Gravity, to promote the Sale of such an idle and infamous Fiction as the LEGEND of the WHITE HORSE! To prepare their passive Pupils for such a Tale, must be to prepare them for any Thing designing Tutors shall think fit to obtrude upon them; and our Author might justly be upbraided with this most solemn and natural Reproof from the Stage.

“ Juvenes liberè eductos in fraudem illicis?”

For my Part, I cannot easily imagine what he means by it; unless perhaps it should be thought a necessary Piece of Policy at present to divert Youth from the Pursuits of useful and solid Learning by bewildering them in the mazy Paths of Antiquities: † As heretofore, for the self-same Reason, they were, for many Generations, entangled in the Cobwebs of the Schools.

† See Letter
to Dr. M. P.
4.

In

In this worthy Employ indeed, it must be confest, they might find an Amusement for Life; especially should they proceed to provide themselves with a complete Equipage a la mode d'Antiquaire. But think only what a merry, or rather melancholy Prospect must a Generation of Gimcrackers, an Age of Cockle-Shell-Fellows afford us; when not a Gentleman's Seat in the Kingdom should be reckoned truly polite without an Apartment for a Raree-Show!

† p. 5.

“The Genius of Men is indeed, as our Author observes, wonderfully diversified, and prepared for different Enquiries.”† And 'tis therefore surely the Duty of those who are entrusted with the Instruction of Youth, to put them upon such Enquiries as are most serviceable and laudable; not to indulge a FALSE TASTE; nor set them a gadding after Discoveries which can be of no Use when made, not even to the Owner: What would this be but giving them a WRONG TURN? of which, we must own, Youth is very susceptible in various Ways and Forms.

*The very same Genius which now displays itself in the trifling Part of ANTIQUITIES, I have often thought, in another Age, would have been no less inquisitive after RELICKS; and indeed every Thing that has but an Antique Cast or Appearance with some is sacred. Our DIVINE taxes the SAXONS and others with a religious Sort of Veneration for WHITE HORSES; and yet I much question if himself does not adore what he supposes to be
only*

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only the Image of one of them, to an equal Degree of Superstition; in his own Language 'tis — a VENERABLE REMAIN † i. e. a RELICK. And I do not at all doubt † p. 26. but a certain Society has as much Regard for a Supposititious Head of HOMER, now in Possession of their Patron, as any Convent abroad has for that of JOHN THE BAPTIST.

So great an Affinity is there betwixt the RELICK-MONGER and the ANTIQUARY; or rather 'tis the very same Genius operating under different Circumstances. No wonder therefore that there should be Protestant, as well as Popish Legendaries: One plain Instance we have in the Case now before us: And tho' 'tis true that most of our Monasteries have been long since suppressed, yet does the genuine Spirit of MONKERY still subsist in those that remain. And it cannot be denied but our Author in particular, especially considering the Competency of his Style, or rather how admirably 'tis adapted to the Purpose, would be a very proper Hand to give us a new Edition of the Life of St. WINIFRID; or the History of the SEVEN CHAMPIONS OF CHRISTENDOM revised and modernis'd. ----

*But to have done with him; and speak my Mind at once. ---- The Case standing thus; tho' no Man living has a greater Regard than myself for all truly judicious and honest Antiquaries, who give a rational Pleasure to Mankind, and do an Honour to their Profession; yet, as 'tis manifestly a growing and encroaching Sect amongst
us,*

us, in which, as in all others, many foolish and false Teachers do arise, I think it high Time that an effectual Check were given to the Impertinent and Imposing. How far the ensuing Discussion of this late most insolent Attempt upon the Understanding of the Curious may contribute towards so good an End, Time alone can shew: For the present, I shall leave it to shift for itself; as, in my Opinion it is very well able to do.

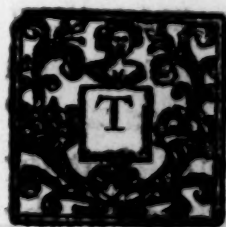




THE
Impertinence *and* Imposture
OF
Modern ANTIQUARIES
DISPLAY'D.

IN A LETTER to a FRIEND.

SIR,



H O' I am no profess'd Antiquary, nor ever design to be so, yet, I must confess, I am not without my Curiosity, or what perhaps may be call'd some Taste for matters of that Nature. 'Tis more particularly a very sensible Pleasure to me at all Times, to hear of any eminent Discoveries this way in our Country, by which the Transactions, Manners, or Customs of our Ancestors may be illustrated.

The publick Advertisement therefore of " A Letter from the
" Reverend Mr. *Wise*, to Doctor *Mead*, concerning some Antiqui-
" ties in *Berkshire*, and particularly shewing that the *White Horse*,
" which gives name to the Vale, is a Monument of the *West-*
B " *Saxons*,

"*Saxons*, made in Memory of a great Victory obtained over the "*Danes*, *A. D.* 871," you will easily imagine, was to me a very acceptable Piece of News.

As Mr. *W.* I am informed, is a Gentleman somewhat advanced in Years, and one who has been long conversant in these Studies, I might very well presume I should meet at least, throughout the whole Performance, with the Traces of a mature and correct Judgment. As he was a Divine, and that of a distinguish'd Class, how could I doubt of his sincere and sacred Regard for Truth and Justice? As he had for a considerable time enjoy'd the Office of *Custos Archivorum*, or Keeper of the Manuscripts in the *Bodleian* Library, I readily conceiv'd his indefatigable Diligence in searching into so rich a Mine of Antiquity had led him upon some curious Memoirs, which had escaped the Observation of all his Predecessors.

When again I was further given to understand, what had been the chief and constant Employment of this learned Divine, for several Years last past, I must own, my Expectation was not a little rais'd to see a shining Instance of the great use of *Coins* and *Medals*, in determining Doubts in our Ancient History, and that by the benefit of such Assistance, he had clear'd his Point past all Dispute.

In a Word, what might we not expect from an Author of Mr. *Wise's* Character in the learned World, possessed, within his own Sphere, of every Advantage to do justice to his Subject, and who has moreover, if I am not misinformed, the Honour to be Member of a SOCIETY expressly professing the *Science of Antiquity*: Where every single Person may be regarded as a perfect *Connoisseur*, or proper Judge in his Faculty; and where we may very well suppose the present Performance was read with Approbation and Applause, before the Publick was favour'd with its Appearance? This was no more than a modest Piece of Deference in our Author to his Brother Members, conformable to the usual Practice of the Royal French Academy, and other the like famous Assemblies of the Learned and Ingenious, wherewith the present Age so happily abounds.

As nothing contributes more to the Sale of a Book than the Character and Opinion we have of the Writer, I was not long hesitating upon what I had to do: A couple of Shillings, thought I

I, surely could not be ill bestow'd for so conspicuous a Phenomenon in Antiquity as the *White Horse*, especially with a Promise of something more into the Bargain, by the same Hand.

Nor was I, (which is no uncommon Case) a little pleas'd with my new Purchase: Scarce had I dipt into it, when I had the agreeable Surprise to find the worthy Person to whom this celebrated Epistle is addressed, and whom myself had long reverenc'd as the great and good HIPPOCRATES of our Isle, was also our British VARRO, and ATTICUS; and one who was become the greatest Patron of ancient Learning, from being himself the greatest Master of it the present Age can boast of. I doubted not therefore but the Piece had been both examin'd and allow'd by so great a *Master* and *Mæcenæ*s; especially when I observ'd it, for the better illustration of the Subject, to be adorn'd with a curious Copper-plate, at his proper Cost and Charges.† As it was also with another by the like Generosity of a certain noble Peer, in whose honourable Family the *Horse* had been many Years; and “who was pleased to encourage our Author's Enquiries, by a free Search into the Writings relating to this Part of his || Estate.”

|| Letr. p. 26.

Nothing therefore could carry a fairer Aspect; nothing seem'd wanting to render the Account perfectly authentick, and what we might depend upon: Certainly, said I, never was so remote a Point in Antiquity so well attested.

But since, Sir, you are pleas'd to desire my Opinion of the Piece, before you give yourself the trouble of procuring it, I should not act a friendly Part by you, should I spare to say—*Caveat Emptor*. However it comes to pass, there are perhaps but few Occasions in Life, wherein it may be more necessary for a Man to bear in Mind that of the Poet — *nunquam homini satis cautum est*, than in buying a Horse; at least we can never be too careful in the Case: For my own Part, I must ingeniously confess I never was more disappointed, not to say Jocky'd or Bit, in my Days, than by this learned *Dealer*.

To enter into a regular Detail of Criticism upon the whole Performance, would be endless; since there is scarce a Paragraph throughout, but is liable to many and just Exceptions. What I chiefly propose therefore, is to shew you that our *Antiquarian* is

† Subscrib'd — *Sumptibus Richardi Mead Archiatri.*

utterly wrong in his main Point, and that there is no shadow of Reason to conclude the Sign of the *White Horse* on *White-horse-hill*, is a Monument of the *West-Saxons*: But that it is a notorious Imposition upon the Publick; a meer Reverie or Fiction of our Author's Brain, void of all Foundation in Truth or Probability.

After a long flourishing and ostentatious Introduction, where it must be acknowledged our Author makes no small Figure before his own Glass; he comes at length to the Proofs, whereon he would establish his Hypothesis; which, in short may be thus stated, *viz.* That,

In the Year 871, the *West-Saxons*, under the conduct of ALFRED, afterwards their King, obtain'd a signal Victory over the *Danes*: That it was the Custom of ancient Times, to perpetuate the Memory of great Actions, by carving some Monument of them upon Rocks and Hills: That a HORSE being the Standard of the *Saxons*, and this Figure being found situate as near as it conveniently could to the Field of Battle, was most certainly designed as a Monument of the Victory aforesaid. "ALFRED therefore, says our Author, "in setting up his Banner for a Token (and here, by the way, "Ps. and V. are quoted) did nothing but what was exactly agree-

* Lett. p. 27. "able to ancient Practice." *

But you will be apt to ask, how does it appear this *Monumental Horse* was made near the Place where the Battle aforesaid was fought? This is a Question indeed; and, for ought I see, is like to continue so: For tho' our Historians tell us that the name of the Place was *ÆSCHESDUNE*, in Modern English *Asbdown*, or *Asb-Hill*: Yet where this *ÆSCHESDUNE* was, is more than any Man living can now tell; or whether it were within Forty Miles of the *Horse*, or Fourscore. Our great *Doctors of Antiquity* differ widely in their Opinions on this Head: One † for instance, will have the Place to be in *Buckinghamshire*; another ‡ in *Sussex*; because there are Places in each of these Counties of like name. And so probably, upon Examination there may be found in every County in *England*; for *Asb-Hill* may be very well supposed to have been no unusual Appellative in this Kingdom.

† Kennet.
‡ Talbot.

The present Bishop of *London* fixes it in *Berkshire*; and not many Miles from the *Horse*: Yet not so near neither, but that our Author well perceiv'd, if the *Bishop* kept his ground, the *Horse* would

would be distanc'd. He therefore very freely corrects his Lordship, and that with an *Air*, as a greater *Adept*, and one that saw farther into these Matters, telling us at once how his Lordship came to be led into such a Mistake.

Here I cannot but just observe a pleasant Instance of the Partiality of Mankind, from which even Divines themselves, it seems, are not exempt: And this is, that they chuse much rather to Correct and Publish the Mistakes of others than their own: Otherwise our Author might have ingenuously declar'd. — I was once myself of his Lordship's Opinion in this Affair, as may appear by the *Index Locorum* at the end of my Edition of *Asser's Life of K. Alfred*, Printed about sixteen Years since, but which I have had no Opportunity as yet, to rectify in a second Edition.

Instead of this, he is perfectly silent as to what himself had Published, but proceeds with a masterly Hand to the Correction of my Lord Bishop, who had fix'd the Place at a Village now call'd *Aston*: "A Name which does not itself, says our Author, favour the Opinion of its being *Ashtown*: For in the oldest Records it is wrote *Eston*, and means no more than the *East Town*." † And † Letr. p. 20. yet in his own *Index*, but now cited, 'tis thus Etymologis'd, viz. *Aston* quasi *Ashton*, five *Ashtown*.

So that here we have *Wise* against *Francis*, and *Francis* against *Wise*; a thing which may prove of no good Consequence in the Republick of Letters: And truly unless this learned Divine has some particular, strong and natural Aversion to the Duties of *Self-Correction*, I am at a loss what Apology to make for him, except perhaps he might be satisfied his *Asser* is very little read, and so may do the less Harm: Or possibly might have good hopes no one would mind such a trifling Passage but himself, who very well knew how to keep his own Secrets, without the least hazard of an Impeachment of his Infallibility *in re Antiquaria*. After all, this is no jesting Matter, but rather greatly to be deplor'd, — that Men of a liberal Education (yet such is the Depravity of human Nature!) should be much more prone to Error, than to the Acknowledgment thereof. Now therefore to resume our Question.

How does it appear this *Horse* is near the Place where this *Battle* was fought? Our Author perswades himself, nay is very positive, yea most confident *He* is the happy Man who has discover'd it at
last

last, -- as briefly thus, -- the Downs hereabouts, says he, are by the Shepherds called *Ashdown* to this Day: And the *Horse* being the *Standard of the Saxons*, must have been made by them as a Monument of the Victory by them here gain'd. So that in fine, we see, the *Horse* proves the Place, or our *Author* proves nothing at all; which last happens to be the very Case, as I shall now proceed to shew.

Our *Author* tells us "no one can be ignorant that the *Horse* " was the *Standard* which the *Saxons* used, both before and after " their coming hither." But this, I beg leave to observe, is a very loose, inaccurate, and sophistical way of speaking, by which 'tis possible he may have deceiv'd and impos'd upon both himself and others: For tho' we should allow (which yet would be granting a Favour) that the *Saxon Standard* was a *Horse*, does it thence follow that every *Horse* in general, however dignified or distinguish'd, or this *Horse* in particular was the *Saxon Standard*? Put the Case a Painter in drawing the *King's Arms*, amongst the rest, instead of drawing the three *Lions passant-guardant*, should make them *couchant-dormant*, would this be the *Arms of England*? Or do we meet with such a notorious Blunder in any of our common Sign-Post-Dawbers? There is scarce one of this low Class of Fellows, but has a Notion how little a Variation in a Coat alters the Property of it, and makes it no more belong to this or that Family. That a *Horse* therefore, in whatever *Position, Pace, or Aspect*, was the *Saxon Standard*, is what I am perswaded our learned and ingenious *Author* will no more affirm upon cooler Thoughts, than that their *Standard* was a *Horse of any Colour whatever*. An Assertion which I am fully satisfied he will never submit to.

Now very unfortunately for him it happens, that some of the strongest Circumstances imaginable are against him, and the whole Stream of Authority: Our Historians, Antiquaries, Genealogists and Heralds, such as *Ferrers, Verstegan, Sammes, Speed, Heylin, Gibson*, do all to a Man represent the *Saxon Horse* as *Rampant*, bearing to the *Left*, with his *right Leg forward*: Whereas this same upon the Hill is a *Gallop*, going off to the *Right*, with his *wrong Leg* before.

Two of these Objections our *Author* was aware of, and has a mind to obviate, by observing the *Horse* in his *present Majesty's Arms* is *Current*, or *Galloping*: But says not a Word which way, only modestly

deftly proceeds, — “ If any Difputes fhould arife amongft Heralds, “ about thefe different *Bearings* of the *Horfe*; as likewise whether “ he ought to be *Current* from the *dexter Part*, or the *finifter*; I “ think till fome other more ancient Record fhall be produc’d, “ they may fairly be determin’d from this AUTHENTICK ONE of “ 867 Years ftanding.

Right! what faid the Conjuror in *Don Quixote*, when the Page made too familiar with his Beard? — “ Learn to reverence, young “ Man, thofe grey Hairs, which are more than thrice three hundred “ Years of Age!” If our Author here is ferious, I cannot fufficiently admire his *Simplicity*: Nor, if he Banters, his *Modesty*. Muft then his moft Sacred Majesty of *Great-Britain* turn his *Horfe* out of his way for a Fellow of a College, and one that has fhewn himfelf to be no Conjuror! With all due Submiffion, I conceive, it would have much more become him to have left this Matter to the next Sitting of the COURT OF HONOUR (whither I refer him) rather than thus pertly to interpoze his Opinion before it was ask’d.

The more we confider it, the more notorious ftill will appear the Uncorrectnefs, Impropriety and Fallacioufnefs of our Author’s Affertion, — “ no one can be ignorant that the *Horfe* was the *Standard* “ which the *Saxons* ufed both before and after their coming “ hither.” — Why yes furely many a one may be ignorant of all this and more too, and yet be an honeft Man for all that, and never the worfe Christian neither, or the Lord have Mercy on our Author! Who, I am very apt to think, with all his Learning and Books about him, cannot fhew he knows himfelf any thing more of the Matter, than that the Saxon Commander *Hengift*, or, as we may call him, *General Stonehorfe*, when he made his Expedition into *Britain*, had a *Horfe* for his *Standard*, which his Succeffors, in the Kingdom of *Kent*, for fome Ages retain’d: But that this was then the *National Standard* of *Saxony*, or the Standard of any other of the Troops which arriv’d here from thofe Parts, is what our Author has not fhewn. And, notwithstanding what he fo wifely fuggelts to the contrary, it feems to me much more probable that *Hengift* took his *Standard* in allufion to his *Name*, than his *Name* in allufion to his *Standard*: And this I am led to believe, becaufe moft probably he had a *Name* before he had a *Standard*; and I never

never heard he went by any other than that of *Hengist* or *Stone-horse*.

As therefore the *Horse* might be the *Standard* most to his Fancy, so the rest of the Chiefs his Countrymen seem every one to have assum'd such *Devices* for this Purpose as pleased them best: Nor can I find, by all the Accounts I have yet met with, that any two Branches of the *Heptarchy* had their Arms alike: Nor was it fit, or is it credible that they should; for as they were oft at War with each other, 'twas necessary their *Standards* should differ from each other.

The learned Editor of the *Chronicon Saxonicum*, who, I presume, may be consulted upon what Authorities he went, has given us, at the End, a Map of the seven Kingdoms, distinguish'd by their several *Arms*. As those of *Kent* were the HORSE: So those of *Wessex* in particular were the DRAGON: The very *Arms*, for ought appears to the contrary, which *Cerdick*, the Founder of that Monarchy, brought over with him out of *Saxony*. Nay, I will add, we have altogether as good Grounds to believe that *Cerdick's Standard*, when he Landed, was the DRAGON, as that *Hengist's* was the HORSE. Judge therefore with what Propriety, not to say Honesty, our Author asserts---“ *no one can be ignorant, &c.*

How would he like to have the Proposition turn'd upon him thus, — no one can be ignorant that the *Dragon* was the *Standard* which the *Saxons* us'd both before and after their coming hither? How I say, would he like this, who, in his time has been a Dealer in *Logick* as well as in *Horses*, and knows very well the Rule.

Syllogizari non est ex particulari, i. e. we cannot from a particular Instance form a general Conclusion?

Had he stated the Matter fairly and truly, he could have said no more than this, — 'tis well known that the *Horse* was the *Standard* of one Body of the *Saxons* brought over hither, and continued for some Generations. This State of the Case might have sav'd him from being so miserably deceived himself, or imposing upon others as he has done: For this would have naturally led him to consider to what Body of the *Saxon People* amongst us this *Standard* belong'd, and not so wretchedly to have inserted, — that when the *West-Saxons* got a Victory they set up the *Kentish Banner* for a *Trophy*! Which puts me in mind of a Saying of that worthy Antiquary, my much honour'd

honour'd and learned Friend, Master *Richard Verstegan*,—"Here-
" of he maketh his own *Fancy* his Author; for other Author of
" more Antiquity than himself he can find none."

But what may still be more surprizing, is that our Author should
call this same *Horse King Alfred's Banner*; when he himself, be-
fore his Edition of *Affer*, has given us an elegant Cut of this Prince,
with his Arms annex'd, *viz.* a *Cross fitched*: Which yet *Heylin* † re-† Help to En-
presents as the Coat of his elder Brothers only, and makes *Alfred* ^{glish History.}
(which may deserve a certain Person's Consideration) to assume one
very different. This Prince indeed must frequently have chang'd
his Coat, or Historians have done it for him. *Speed* assigns him a
Cross formy without further Addition: And on the Reverse of his
Coin has a sort of Cypher only. The History of *Gloucestershire*
tells us, that King *Alfred's Arms* are upon *Kempsford Tower*;
where we find the Cross aforesaid between five Martlets. And
thus much, I believe will bear no Dispute, that the *West Saxon Mo-*
narchs, upon their Conversion to Christianity, did change their
Heathenish Dragon for the *Holy Cross*. That K. *Alfred* therefore,
whose incomparable Wisdom and Piety our Author is as well ac-
quainted with, as if he had been his Chaplain in Ordinary, when his
good People were so happily rid of their *Dragon*, that Emblem of
the Devil, should range them again under a Banner, in its original
no less Pagan, and leave it behind him as an eternal Monument of
the greatest of all his Military Atchievements, * is a Thought alto- * Letr. p. 16.
gether unworthy of him: And it will much better become us, in
the midst of such Uncertainties, to be finally determin'd by that *most*
Authentick Record the OXFORD-ALMANACK for 1735: Where we
have K. *Alfred* in all his Glory, seated upon his Royal Throne,
under his own Ensign; which is exhibited as the very same upon
the Tower aforesaid, bating one *Martlet* only.

As the last mention'd is a Piece set forth by publick Authority of
one of the most substantial learned Bodies in the Universe, and that
not devised in haste but upon mature Deliberation, as being the Pro-
duct of a whole Year, if not the whole product of the Year, I have
not scrupled to pronounce it *Authentick*, as what we may safely re-
ly upon, and give an entire Credit to. I think therefore I cannot
do better than rest the Merits of the Cause here; at least till some-
thing of equal Weight and Moment appears in favour of the *Horse*:

Which yet I shall for ever despair of, unless perhaps some *Coin*, or *Medal* struck upon the Occasion, should be found against our Author's next Edition, by one that knows where to find it: Or we could happily dig up K. *Alfred's BROAD-SEAL*; which sort of Medals indeed, seem to me of all others the most *Authentick*: And therefore I can never sufficiently admire and extol the happy Thought of that most ingenious and judicious Antiquarian Mr. *John Speed*; who in his *Successions of England's Monarchs* never fails, where it could possibly be had, at the Beginning of every Reign, to present his Readers with one of them; an Example in my humble Opinion, worthy the Imitation of all future Historians, and I cannot but much lament that the Practice has been discontinued: Because, as has been said, there is something in it so very *Authentick*.

But to deal fairly and above board; I could here tell our Author that whatever of this Nature may possibly turn up in his Favour, there is still a Lyon, an invincible Lyon in his way; and that is, his own dear Friend *ASSER*: Who, tho' he has expressly Wrote the Life of *Alfred*, and been so particular in his Description of the Battle of *Asbdown*, as to tell us he saw with *his own proper Eyes* † the very Bush about which it began, yet says not one Word of the *Horse*; to make bold for once, with a favourite Phrase of our learned Author, *ne res quidem*.

Asser moreover having been not only Biographer to his Majesty, but also his intimate Friend and Crony, we may very well suppose that neither of them knew any thing of the *Beast*: Or that if there were any such *Tit* upon the Common, in their Time, they did not think him worth their owning or minding, no not in his *Prime*, tho' now, when *full-ag'd*, by a sudden turn of Fate, is he become — “*the Glory of the Saxon Antiquities* :” And, at the Expence of a Right Honourable and Noble Peer, *whose Vertues have plac'd him high in the Veneration of Mankind*, made as Immortal as *WISE* and *BRASS* can make him. §

By this time, Sir, I know you will want to hear more particularly, what sort of *Steed* this is, which has been so highly honour'd by the *NOBLE* and the *WISE*; and made as great a Figure in our

† Quam nos ipsi nostris propriis oculis vidimus. p. 23.

§ The Inscription of the Plate is — *Vetustatis Saxonicae decus singulare Aere immortali donavit Honoratiss. Dns Gulielmus Baro de Craven.*

publick Advertisements, during the Season, as the best bred Stallion in the Kingdom.

Our Author shall himself inform you ; and you will at the same time have a Sketch of that elegant and elevated Style, which at present bears the Bell in our Seats of Learning : And for which the Performance now before us, is more particularly celebrated. Here, say they, you will find none of the Uncouthness or Rust of the Antiquary, but will at once see both the Scholar and the Gentleman : Tho' his Subject, as most of this Nature, is dark and dreary ; yet has he found means to embellish it, by an Expression perfectly bright and charming : In a Word, 'tis *well Wrote*, ECCE SIGNUM!

“ After this manner is our *Horse* form'd on the side of an high
 “ and steep Hill, facing the North-East.—His Dimensions are ex-
 “ tended over an Acre of Ground, or thereabouts : His Head,
 “ Neck, Body and Tail, consist of one white Line ; as does also
 “ each of his four Legs. This is done by cutting a Trench into
 “ the Chalk, of about two or three Feet deep, and about ten
 “ Feet broad.—The Horse at first view, is enough to raise the
 “ Admiration of every curious Spectator, being design'd in so master-
 “ like a Manner, that it may defy the Painter's Skill to give a more
 “ exact Description of that Animal.—If we consider it farther, we must
 “ likewise allow that no small Skill in *Opticks* was requisite, both
 “ for the choice of the Ground, and for the disposing rude Lines,
 “ as they appear to a Person upon the Spot, in such a manner as to
 “ form so beautiful a Representation. — And again ; if *Durability*
 “ was intended, the Ingenuity of the Artift will appear still greater.
 “ For, from its barren Soil, and steep Situation, it has nothing to
 “ fear from the Inroads of the Plough, the Grazing of larger Cat-
 “ tle, or the Stagnation of Waters.—The supplies which Nature is
 “ continually affording, occasion the Turf on the upper Verge of his
 “ Body, for want of Continuity, to crumble and fall off into the
 “ white Trench, which in many Years time produces small Specks
 “ of Turf, and not a little obscures the Brightness of the Horse.
 “ Tho' there is no danger from hence of the whole Figure being
 “ obliterated ; yet the Neighbouring Inhabitants have a Custom of
 “ *scouring the Horse*, as they call it ; at which Time a solemn Fes-
 “ tival is celebrated, and manlike Games with Prizes exhibited ;

Letr. p. 24.

“ which NO DOUBT had their Original in the *Saxon Times*, in Memory of the Victory.”

“ If ever the Genius of *King Alfred* exerted itself, (and it never fail'd him in his greatest Exigencies) it did remarkably so upon the account of this *Trophy*.—Tho' he had not the Opportunity of raising, like other Conquerors, a stupendous Monument of Brass or Marble, yet he has shewn an admirable Contrivance, in erecting one magnificent enough, tho' simple in its Design; executed too with little Labour and no Expence; that may hereafter vye with the PYRAMIDS for Duration, and perhaps exist, when those shall be no more.”

Letr. p. 26.

Here, Sir, tho' amongst many other Excellencies, you will readily distinguish our Author's beautiful Allusion to your Friend *Horace*, without the Pedantry of citing him.

*Exegi monumentum ære perennius,
Regalique situ Pyramidum altius :
Quod non imber edax, non aquilo impotens,
Possit diruere, aut innumerabilis
Annorum series, et fuga temporum.*

Nor need I point out to you his noble Sallies in the Sublime, without the least hazard of falling into Bombast, or exposing himself in his Flights by a ridiculous Affectation.

But I have a Remark or two to offer of another Nature.—As I can refuse nothing that you desire, I have been to see the *Horse* myself, and view'd him both at a distance and at hand: Tho' he has resemblance enough to be call'd a *Horse* as properly as any other *Quadrupede*, yet I cannot say he is a *perfect Picture of a Horse*. And were not our Author a Divine of unquestionable Veracity, he would hardly gain belief when he tells us, — “ he is design'd in so master-like a Manner, that it may defy the Painter's Skill, to give a more exact Description of that Animal.” In this he may be thought for once, a little too indulgent to his Fancy; especially if it be consider'd the *Horse* has been Curried for some Centuries, by a sort of Grooms who are not so perfectly skill'd in *Opticks* as our Author's *Saxon Operators* might be: These *Scourers* (to give them their proper Title) set heartily about him with their Mattocks and Spades, but dress him over something in a Hurry, as being in haste to receive their Recompence of Reward, which is a good Belly-full of Ale.

As

As to his *Head*; our Author owns it wants a little Repairing: The rest of his *Forehand* is not so much amiss, especially not at all too short, being from his Ears to his Withers, about fifty of my Paces, *i. e.* 150 Feet. But then he is quite a *light-bodied one*: I may say, for a Horse that has lain so long at Grass, carries no *Body at all*; insomuch that, should he take up Hill, were I upon the Back of him, I should be under terrible Apprehensions he would slip thro' his Girth. If his Tail is (and our Author roundly vouches for it †) † p. 25. as it was from the Beginning, 'tis a plain Case he never carried it well; but just as you have seen a Fox drag his Brush when almost down.

This perhaps might be help'd by *Nicking*; but that being a modern Invention, would derogate from his Antiquity, which is all in all.

Tho', to do the Horse Justice, I verily believe our Author is himself here mistaken, that the Horse originally set a much better Tail: But the Rain, having the same Effect upon him as upon other Horses, has made him drop his Dock, and, by degrees, may bring his Tail betwixt his Legs. The Reason is very visible; the Water upon every hasty Shower collected in his Neck and Body runs with a full Current down his Tail, and wearing the Trench on the lower side, brings it still nearer and nearer to his Hocks. Our Author, you will say, might better have preserv'd the Idea of an *Imber edax*, than by his Words *Stagnation of Waters*.

Not to descend to the Examination of his Legs, Pasterns, &c. I shall only further observe, that, in my Opinion he Gallops quite too high, and, as I have already said, sets his wrong Leg forward: But of that perhaps a good use may be made hereafter.

An *Oxford Scholar*, whom the same Curiosity had led to the Spot, presented me at Sight with the Lines following.

See here the Pad of good King *Alfry*, *

Sure never was so rare a Palfry!

Tho' Earth his Dam, his Sire a Spade,

No Painter e'er a finer made.

Not *Wotton* in his Hunting-pieces,

Can shew one such a Tit as this is;

Which

* p. 15.
Note c.

Which on immortal Brasse we've Graven,
At the Expence of my Lord —

As to the *Durability* of the *Horse*, as our Author terms it, or fitness of the Soil, and Situation to preserve the Figure, *when Pyramids shall be no more*: This also is a Notion he seems hastily to have run into, for want of better Consideration. Tho' it may not be subject to a constant standing Water, yet an occasional Current, as observ'd, may do its Business as effectually: And tho' neither the Plough nor the Cow may deface it, yet we Country People know what work a hard Frosty Winter will make in a Trench, the Face of whose Banks, like these, consists of hollow Mould and rubble Stones. He has himself hinted, that for want of Scouring of late Years, his *White Horse* is become a sort of *Dapple*; and I may venture to hold him a small Wager that, should it scape a Scouring but two seven Years more, his *Dapple* would become a *Green one*: Which would be still a greater Rarity, for all true Lovers of Antiquity.

I cannot dismiss the Article of the *Perpetuity of the Horse*, without a melancholy Reflexion upon the short-sightedness of human Vanity: How liable our deepest Devices are to be defeated, and what a burlesque Fate attends them. This long-headed Monarch K. *Alfred* (if after all, it should be as our Author would have it) to immortalise the Fame of his Victory, contrives a Horse which, by the helping hand of the Country, should last for ever: The Country most religiously preserves the Monument, but utterly forgets both the Maker, and what it was made for.

"*O curas hominum! O quantum est in rebus inane!*" This Reflexion I have dropt by the way, because upon Examination perhaps it may be found a much more common Case with Monuments than at first thought is usually imagin'd.—The matchless *STONEHENGE*, for Instance, no doubt, was built for Eternity, and with a fair Prospect to convey its Founder's Name and Design down to the latest Ages: Yet has now long since serv'd only as a Bone for Antiquaries to pick, or rather to break their Teeth upon: For which of them can say, by *whom*, *when*, or *why* it was made, with any more Certainty than how it was form'd? Much the same also has been the Lot of some of the Pyramids themselves.

But

But to return once more to the *Colour* of our Horse. 'Tis diverting enough to observe with what an earnest and fervent Zeal our Author espouses this Particular, as if the very *Saxony* of the Beast depended upon it. Whereas, he owns *Albertus Krantz* (himself, as I take it, a *Saxon*, and no mean Antiquary) relates in his *Saxonia*, Lib. 2. C. 24. that the *Saxon Arms*, before they embrac'd Christianity, was a *Horse of another Colour*, even a *Fet-black*. And truly I cannot but say *Minbeer Krantz* is very ill us'd by him, and that upon no great Provocation, when he is told "his Account savours too much of Legend and Allegory, to deserve Credit."

† Surely our Author here a little forgets himself: Does it become a grave *Bachelor of Divinity* to pronounce things unworthy of Credit, when they favour no more than this of *Legend* and *Allegory*? APPELLO ORTHODOXOS. In the mean time I could tell him, it was one of the wise Sayings of our Ancestors, even our *Saxon Ancestors*, that "A good Horse was never of a bad Colour." And might I be worthy to interpose my private Opinion, the *Horse* we are now upon happens to be a *White One*, only because his Native Soil abounds with Chalk, or a sort of white Lime-Stone: Just as that other Nag of Renown, from whom the Vale of *Red-Horse* is denominated, happens to be *Red*, only because he is cut in a ruddy Soil. Which Things put me in mind of a certain learned Academick, who much admiring that his Horse, being turned out in the Snow, should roll in it, was very gravely told it was — "Because he had no where else to roll." In a Word, whoever will have such sort of Horses, must be content with such sort of *Colour* as the Country affords, however he may blazon his own Arms.

There is certainly, Sir, nothing more in it: And yet I have been told, 'twas from *Colour* only our Author first claim'd this Horse as one of King *Alfred's Stud*: I should not therefore be in the least surpris'd to hear he has also challeng'd the Horse of *Stocks-Market*. But this I could rather Wish; that whereas this last mention'd Beast is scarce fit to be above Ground, he were privately buried under some Barrow upon *Asbdown*, to be dug up in due Season for the Honour of K. *Alfred*, and the Exercitations of future Antiquaries. What a Lustre would this cast upon the worthy Gentleman now before us? What a Light must it give to our *English History*? Especially

ally, by the help of a little of our Author's *ÆS IMMORTALE*.

This *ÆS IMMORTALE*, Sir, I am fully satisfied, must be a new sort of Metal to you; what perhaps you have never heard of before: I shall therefore give you the best Account I can of it; which is only this, — that it is a Preparation infinitely exceeding the *Æs Corinthiacum* of the Antients, and absolutely unknown to them; the Name itself now first divulg'd to the World by our Author: Who, 'tis supposed must certainly be possess'd of a very large Stock of it, and has hereby been enabled actually to do many wonderful Feats, and to attempt more with regard to his late Epistolary Dissertation. As 1st, That by vertue hereof he has impos'd upon
 “ The greatest Master of ancient Learning the present Age can boast
 “ of:” Nay, upon a whole Society of Antiquaries, “ Whose uni-
 “ ted Endeavours promised not only to bring to Light thousands of
 “ new Particulars relating to our *English* History, but to † cor-
 “ rect the Falsities of as many old Ones.”

† Letr. p. 6.

2^{dly}. By vertue again of this same wonderful Preparation has he not only insinuated himself into the good Graces of a certain Nobleman so far as to obtain a handsome Piece of Plate * from him; but also to attempt to fix a Rent Charge upon his Estate, towards keeping a *Chimera*, or Horse of his own Invention. § Nor 3^{dly}, Has he blush'd to project an Alteration in the Arms of the present Royal Family. || Nor 4^{thly}, Tho' himself a Minister of Christ, to profess his hopes of seeing the *Christian Æra* sup- planted in our *English* History, by a new One, in favour of this Brute of a *Horse*. “ Nor should I Despair, says he, of its having
 “ still a more general Effect, by creating a new *Æra* in our *English*
 “ History, viz. THE RESTORATION OF THE SAXON OLYM-
 PICKS.

* Vid. Inter.
 P. 24, 25.

|| P. 27.

These, I must confess, appear'd to me to be bold Strokes: But that I might know what others thought as well as myself, I introduced the Subject into a numerous mixt Assembly of all Parties, where most were supposed to have some Relish for things of this Nature. Many, I found, were great Admirers of our *Author* and his *Horse* too: Others again cried there was nothing at all in the

§ If I may presume to say it, it will become the generous Mind of the noble Lord, who by inheriting the Manor of *Ashdown*, as well as by his amiable Qualities (coax him Pug!) may be said to stand in the Place of K. *Alfred*, to set apart a sufficient Fund, for the perpetual, &c. Letr. p. 33.

whole

whole Performance, but a meer heap of Conjectures, just (as the Proverb has it) "*what the Painter pleas'd*. And some even wish'd the poor Gentleman was not touch'd in his Head, as we say, and subject to the Delusions of a disorder'd or childish Imagination: As idle Boys will lye on their Backs, and fancy they see *Bulls*, and *Bears*, and *Horses* in the Clouds. So various were the Sentiments of the Learned in a Case so clear!

Amongst the rest was a *stanch old Whig*; a Person of very curious and extensive Reading, and most acute Judgment in the finest parts of Literature: But who had this diverting Foible with him — verily to believe, that a *Tory Priest*, as his Phrase is, never publish'd any thing but with a View one way or other, by hook or by crook, to promote the Interest of the *Pretender*: Nor could he possibly be perswaded, our Author would ever have exerted so much of his Art and Abilities in the *Management of the Great Horse*, for any other Service. — "I don't know what to make, said he, of your *Tory Priest*; I don't like his flirting at the *King's-Arms*, as if the *Hanover Horse* set his Head the wrong way. He puts on a great deal of Zeal, it seems, for the *Restoration of the Saxon Olympicks*: But what is't to him, whether the *Saxons* thrash'd the *Danes*, or the *Danes* thrash'd the *Saxons* 800 Years ago? Were they not all Bees out of the same Hive? Or, if you will, Hornets of the same Nest? And can any one of us at this time a-Day, say he has a drop more of *Saxon* than *Danish* Blood in his Veins? I wish therefore he has not some *other Restoration* more at Heart, which might indeed create what he owns he does not despair of — *a new Era in our English History*. Under pretence of *Scouring the Horse*, you may find a *Posse* got together would *Scour the Country with a Vengeance*."

I have heard a Bird Sing the first *Scouring* was to have been upon a certain *Succession* of late: But things not answering their Expectation, it was deferr'd to a more proper Season; which by some is now eagerly look'd for; and may they Gape till their Jaws ache. I could point out, were there any occasion, not a few more very suspicious Passages, in this uncanonical Epistle of St. *Francis*. I shall mention one only: Does he not plainly ape the PATRIOT, when, with a steady formal Phyz, he professes his desire to have the World

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look

look upon this Product of his Pen, not as design'd to serve any private Ends, but a *Tribute due to publick Spirit*. †

But, continued he, look into his Edition of *ASSER'S LIFE OF ALFRED*, and there you will see clear enough what HE would be at. There, writing in *Latin*, he has not scrupled to transcribe from a certain pragmatical Popish Emiffary contemporary with *LAUD*, these and the like Encomiums of this *Pattern Prince* of his, as the greatest honour he could possibly do his Memory, *viz.* “ That he alone of all our *English* Kings had received his Crown “ and Inauguration, at the Hands of the *Pope of Rome* : That “ *therefore* God had blessed and prosper'd him above all others “ for this very reason,—because he was Crown'd and Anointed by “ his own Vicar upon Earth. That he was a constant Visitor of the “ *Holy Places*. That he, where-ever he went, carried about him “ the *Relicks of the Saints*, in which, next to God, he put his “ greatest Trust and Confidence.”—And much more to the same Tune.

Now, said he, what must all these tend to? *Cui bono*? Need any one be told whose Character such Eulogies will best tally with? And must not your Author himself be an arrant *Shavelin*? Or, one ripe for *Tonsure*? Between such a *Tory-Priest* and a *Popish One*, your Subtle Logicians perhaps may coin some nice *Distinction*, but they must have better Eyes than mine that can see much *Difference*. Compare only with this, what you meet with in a late § Letr. p. 13. flabberring Epistle.—“ A Prince eminently Pious.” § “ The most perfect Monarch that ever adorn'd the *English* Throne.” And, again, “ the greatest Prince this Isle was ever blessed with.”—“ An inimitable Prince, &c. &c. &c.”

No doubt but *ALFRED*, as *BLUFF* said by *SCIPIO*, “ was a “ pretty Fellow in his Day,” but for your Author thus to lavish away all his Praises upon an *old Saxon Monarch*, who has been dead and rotten best part of a Thousand Years, without being able to edge in one good Word for the Prince now on the Throne, is no great Symptom of his *Affection* or *Loyalty*; to say nothing of the *good Breeding* he so much pretends to. *

* The Gentleman is here thought to allude to what Mr. W. says, p. 5. *viz.* “ If there “ are some who can see no Beauty but in what themselves are in Love with, yet it would be “ much to the Credit of their *good Breeding*, if they would treat with Civility, what may “ appear to them less agreeable.”

And

And for his ASSER; what is he, but a Rascally Sycophant of a Monk; who speaking of the Death of one Bishop EALSTAN, tells us it happened after he had HONOURABLY govern'd his See above 50 Years; when himself had before related, how this very Bishop EALSTAN took the Advantage of the absence of King ETHELWULPH, no bad Friend to the Clergy, to instigate the Prince his eldest Son, actually to Rebel against his Father, to the great Scandal (as himself owns) of the Christian World! And then what Credit is there to be given to a prostitute Scribler, who to magnify his Hero, forsooth, leaves it upon Record, that in his Days, the Houses were built of Gold and Silver. Is there any thing in all the Travels of Gulliver that comes up to This?

So much for his ASSER: And I wish your Letter-writer himself be much honefter. He sets out indeed with one of the honestest Principles in the World; "to restore things lost to their proper Owners." But what regard has he to it in Fact, when he robs the brave King ETHELRED of his Victory at *Asbdown*, purely to trick up an *Idol of his own*, with his Laurels? If ETHELRED commanded there in Chief, (as your Author cannot deny) to whom was the Honour of the Day to be ascrib'd? But, says he, "it does not appear from ASSER, that the King was at all concern'd in the Action, more than by his Prayers.?" Here, by the way, is a rare Divine indeed! As if *Prayers* signified nothing in time of Action! A fine *Sneer* at Devotion truly! Did he never hear, that "whilst the Hands of MOSES were held up, ISRAEL prevail'd?" Had some People said any such thing, they would have been blasted on the Spot as *Infidels*, *Atheists*, and Underminers of all Religion!

But no matter what appears, or does not appear from ASSER: Any one with half an Eye, may see this Place of ASSER is mutilated and imperfect: However, nothing from him appears to the contrary but that the *King was in the Action*. His Majesty, it seems, was in his Tent at his Devotion, when Intelligence came that the DANES were in Motion to Attack him: Notwithstanding which he signified his Pleasure, that Divine Service should not be interrupted for them; that he would not march till *Masse* was done: But does it thence follow, he did not march as soon as it was done; or that the Battle was over before the *Masse* was ended? If so,

they had in those Days very short Battles, or very long Prayers. I remember to have fomewhere read, that one of *Q. Bess's* Admirals was at Bowls upon *Tilbury Green*, when News was brought him that the SPANIARDS were coming: — “ Let them come, said he, I’ll not stir off the Green till the Game’s up: But then he soon made one amongst them, and had a glorious Share too in the Action.

I say again, no matter what does not appear from *ASSER*: *WILLIAM OF MALMSBURY* expressly assures us—“ The Piety of *ETHELRED* was of very great Service on this Occasion: That when the young *Hotspur ALFRED* had engag’d the DANES with more Courage than Conduct, and was about to take to his Heels, and (as *BROMPTON* says) *had like to have left his Honour behind him*; then up came the King in due Season, and, being sign’d with the Sign of the Cross, by *his own Valour and the Divine Assistance* turn’d the Scale, and bore down all before him.

It may be here worthy Observance, what a much more awful Sense these antient Monks had of the Power and Influence of Devotion, than what your modern One (*that great Restorer of things lost to their proper Owners*) has bewray’d on this Occasion. He owns truly in a soft and prevaricating Tone, the abovemention’d Writers do give *somewhat a different Account of the Matter*: † *A different Account indeed!*

I tell you once more therefore, I don’t like your *Tory-Priest*. Nor can I find that he has any Turn for *Antiquities*; but is a wrong-headed Creature; without Penetration, without Discernment: And a meer GOSSIP to boot. What idle Tales must we be told of *St. George’s killing the Dragon in Berkshire*: * And how, once upon a Time, there liv’d hard by an *Invisible Smith*: And if a Traveller’s Horse had lost a Shoe, the Traveller had no more to do, but leave his Horse with a Penny at a certain Stone, he’d soon find his Horse shod, but the Money gone. || Are these the Studies *young Gentlemen at the University* have been taught to reckon amongst their chiefest *Personal Accomplishments*? § Is this that sort of *ancient Learning*, of which, he would give us to understand his Patron is the greatest Master now living? Are these Records worthy the perusal *DOMINI ARCHIATRI*? Or are they not Stories much fitter for a *Nurse* than a *Doctor*? I must needs say I was sorry and

Letr. p. 18.

* Letr. p. 45.

|| Letr. p. 37.

§ Letr. p. 6.

and asham'd to see any Portion of the Time of so great and useful a Man, every Moment whereof is precious, should be taken up with an attendance to such wretched, low, Chimney-corner Stuff as this!

But enough, and too much of your Author's Quarto Volume of Antiquities in *Berkshire*. His very *Manner*, *Style*, and *Air* disgust me: What a puffing, and boasting, and vap'ring is here? And all the while quite beside the Cushion! I hate a *vain, vaunting Priest*! — But I spare him; tho' not altogether out of the dread of falling under the Lash of that shrew'd Observation of his, so quaintly exprest; ——"That Ignorance is interested to have perpetual Bickerings with Science:" * For however that may * Letr. p. 4. be, I shall always think it my Interest to guard against the Imposture of all *sham Pretenders* to Science, or to — whatsoever.

As the good Gentleman seem'd a little transported by the warmth of his Temper and his Zeal, and to speak from the very bottom of his Heart, he had no sooner done but the whole Company burst out a Laughing; observing withal, that he concluded perfectly in *Character*. Yet most, I found, tho' they could not help smiling at his *over-vigilance* (as some were pleas'd to term it) for our present happy Establishment, agreed that there was but too much *Truth* and *Justice* in all his Observations.

For my own Part, being no *Party-Man*, I said nothing; and indeed why should I, who have so long withdrawn my self from the World, trouble my Head about the *Publick*? Are they not enough to take Care of themselves? But what I promised you, Sir, as my private Friend, I flatter myself I have perform'd, which was to give you the Diversion of dismounting the bold Champion of the *White Horse*: I hope also I may add without Vanity, I have given him a fair Fall upon his own Dunghill: And such a one too as would make any *Antiquary* of Spirit go hang himself in his own Circingle. But should this Letter ever have the Misfortune to fall into his Hands (which yet, for fear of the worst, your goodness will take Care to prevent) I should still hope better things of our Author *Wise*, and that he would be prevail'd upon by his Friends to live and repent, and recant. All I should insist upon, is only this, that, by way of *Amende honorable*, he would once more get upon the Back of ROSINANTE, and thence, for the better notoriety of the Fact, make his publick Recantation

at the next *Scouring*, the very first Day of the *Restoration of the Saxon Olympicks*: And from that Day forward, instead of the Name of FRANCIS, assume that of JOCKEY as his proper Name. This, in my humble Opinion, is no more than what the Interest of *Truth* and *Justice*, the Honour of his *Faculty*, and, if I may use those Words, the *Publick Good* require at his Hands: And thus shall this *immortal Horse*, from a feign'd Monument of the *West-Saxons*, become in Fact his own: Why should the World be any longer impos'd upon?

† p. 26.

Having brought things to this fair and friendly Issue, I should now, Sir, resign my Pen to its proper Station; but that I know you will expect to hear, since I have been to view the *Horse* myself, and bestow'd so much Pains in currying him; whether I have not some Notion of my own what this VENERABLE REMAIN, as our pious Author reverently expresses it, † was really design'd for. I have only Time to tell you—Below the Horse, at a proper distance for what I am going to mention, is a very curious *Barrow*, call'd DRAGON-HILL; which our Author, I find, as others before him, is willing should pass for the *Tomb* of one of the PEN-DRAGONS, *i. e.* Chiefs or Heads (for such is the well-known import of the Word) of the *British Kings*: Might I therefore put in my Fancy amongst the rest, I should imagine, that if the *Horse* were a *Standard* or *Banner*, it was a *British* one: And plac'd there according to a Custom, which has prevail'd in this Nation Time out of Mind, of placing things of that nature over Monuments; of which *Cambden* cites an Instance more than two Centuries before the Battle of *Ashdown*. And this Conjecture would be strengthned also by the *Figure* and *Posture* of the *Horse* in every Circumstance; which are exactly the same with what we may observe upon some *British Coins* in *Speed*: Infomuch, that I might with Justice here use our Author's Words, — “that it may “defy the Painter's Skill to give a more exact Description,” saving the Accident which has beset his Tail, 'tis the *very Thing*: And this was the Reason I observ'd, that tho' the *Horse* did set his wrong Leg forward, a good use might one time or other be made of it.

Should this Conjecture of mine meet with a favourable Reception, at the next Session of his Society, and be admitted INTER FIDEI

FIDEI ANTIQUARIÆ ARTICULOS, as part of the *Antiquaries Creed*; what a cutting Consideration must it be to a Member of an Establish'd Character to reflect, that, instead of reviving or restoring a Point in his Profession, he has derogated from its Antiquity some hundred Years! The very Thought too, of being out-done by one that is no Professor, may have fatal Consequences: To prevent which, as far as in me lies, I shall not be too positive or pressing in the Case: Nay, far be it from me to desire any worthy Gentleman's *Fee Simple* should be incumber'd in support of a Conceit of mine, which at last may prove a meer REVERIE. For after all, 'tis very possible the HORSE might be originally no more than a *Lusus Pastorum*; a Fancy of the Neighbouring Shepherds, to divert themselves at their leisure Hours. I have observ'd in several Parts of *England*, upon Downs, Heaths and Commons, Trenches cut by them in the way of a Labyrinth or Maze, which are call'd *Troy-Towns*; and if Shepherds could make *Troy-Towns*, why not *Trojan Horses*? And why should not this Thought lead us back to our *Trojan Ancestors*? This would be retrieving a *Point of Antiquity* indeed. GEOFFRY of MONMOUTH is very clear in this most noble PEDIGREE of his Countrymen: Which also, we may, learn from Mr. SPEED, † kept Possession above four hundred Years, and was receiv'd down to his Time with general Applause. p. 14. ^{† ubi supra} And tho' now a Days old GEOFFRY, forsooth, is reckon'd among the *Fabulous Writers*, and passes for little better than a ROMANCER, yet will I dare to say, he is not a jot more so than some of our new GEOFFRYS are, nor so much neither.

I have only to add, that in his BRITANNIA, upon mention of the celebrated RED-HORSE in WARWICKSHIRE, (which Steed gives Denomination to a VALE also) Mr. *Cambden* tells us plainly "it was made by the COUNTRY-PEOPLE." Such, I suppose therefore was the Tradition there in his Time: Nor shall I dispute the Fact: Tho' from the Remains of a Work, of considerable Extent, running just above it, which has the Appearance of a *Military Entrenchment left imperfect*, some would imagine it to have been originally a Device of the *Soldiery*; who are sometimes Men of no less leisure than the *Shepherds*: And this perhaps may hereafter afford matter of much Speculation to those who have still more
time

time upon their Hands, than either of the former: Such I take to be the Generality of our MODERN VERTUOSI.

But the great and only Question in the Case, worthy the Consideration of our REVEREND and LEARNED ANTIQUARY, already encumber'd with the Task of half an Age, and of the utmost Consequence, § is this — “Why VALES should have HORSES to their GODFATHERS.” I could myself, perhaps, offer some Reasons, which might go a good way towards the Solution of a Point of this Importance, but that I ever lov'd to hear my *Betters* speak before me. *Who am,*

S I R,



Your ever faithful

And most obedient humble Servant

Sept. 3. 1739.

P. R.

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

P Reface, Page 6. in the bottom Margin, for, et meo, read *et in eo*. for, gloriosa, read *gloriola*; and for, Ep. Tam, read *Ep. Fam.* Page 9. lin. 6. for, Advertissement, read *Avertissement*. Page 11. l. penult. for, very Shape, read *airy Shape*. Letter, Pag. 1. for, in our Country, read in our *own* Country. Page 3. lin. 31. for, ingeniously confels, read *ingeniously* confels. Page 8. lin. 36. for, incerted, read *inferred*. Page 17. lin. 31. for, Succession, read *Seceffion*.